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ARREST OF AARON BURR

IN ALABAMA, IN 1807.

BY ALBERT J. PICKETT,

OF MONTGOMERY.

Oct. 18-01

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We conclude in this day's paper the interesting narrative of Aaron Burr who was arrested in Alabama in 1807. We request our contemporaries to republish it, as desired by the author, and as a document which will afford their readers much entertainment and historical information.

We understand that Col. Pickett finished the collection of the material for the History of Alabama in June last, and during the summer compiled, from an immense mass of information, collected by him, about three hundred pages of his History. He expects to complete the work in six months ready for the press.

The History will commence with the narrative of De Soto's expedition through Alabama in the summer and fall of 1540. Two original journals of this romantic and unequalled march have been procured: one from Paris, published in 1731 by Garsellasso de La Vega, who wrote from notes made by three Spanish cavaliers, who were with De Soto; the other was written by a "Portuguese Eye-Witness," who was also with De Soto. This book was purchased in London, and was translated into old English and republished in 1812. Historians rely more upon the latter than the former, but Col. Pickett, upon careful examination of the two journals, has found, we understand, but little difference in their most material statements.

After completing the expedition of De Soto, the author will then conduct his readers to the next period in the History of Alabama, commencing in 1698, when a French Colony, under Iberville, settled

Boloxi, and afterwards Mobile and Dauphin's Island in 1701. The dark period of an hundred and sixty-one years from the days of De Soto till 1701, when the French settled Alabama, will be passed over in silence, because the author has been unable to find any book, or manuscript, which announces the fact that a solitary white man ever saw Alabama, proper, during that period. But the coast of Florida during that time was often visited and settled, temporarily, by the Spanish and French.

Resuming the history of Alabama at the period of 1701, the author will detail interesting facts from abundant material from that period until 1763. In this period of sixty-two years, the French are found to be the owners and occupiers of Alabama; having forts and trading establishments at Dauphine Island, Mobile, St. Stephens, Fort Tombeckbe, (now Jones' Bluff on the Tombigby river) at Fort Toulouse situate six miles above the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa, now known as old Fort Jackson, and at Fort Tensa where Stockton now is. Upon this truly interesting period of our history, the author has obtained, at great trouble and expense, thirty-five different histories of Louisiana, including valuable manuscripts. Alabama was then a part of Louisiana. These books were written by intelligent and reliable men from personal observation; are chiefly in the French language, and were procured for the author in Paris, Madrid and London.

In 1763 France lost Louisiana, and Alabama with it. All her forts were disman-

led in our territory and her troops withdrawn from them. The conquerors, the English, took possession of Mobile and South Alabama in 1763, and held dominion over until the 14th March, 1780, when Don Galves took the territory from them for the King of Spain. Col. Pickett has some interesting books, procured in London, upon the English portion of the History of Alabama—a period of seventeen years. The author, after proceeding with his readers through the English times, will commence with the Spanish period of thirty-three years from 1780 to 1813, when Wilkinson took Mobile from the Spaniards and hoisted the flag of the United States. Upon the Spanish period of thirty-three years, the author has obtained from various parts of Europe many old, rare and valuable works upon the Floridas, within which Alabama was then embraced.

The History of Alabama will continue on from 1813 to the end of Gov. Bibb's administration in 1820, embracing a most thrilling and interesting period of seven years. The author has procured by arduous labor, much travel and correspondence, an immense mass of facts taken down in the form of notes from the lips of living witnesses. It will be, decidedly, we are informed, the most interesting portion of the work.

Upon the Indians of Alabama the author will be very full. He will be able to give a complete history of the Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Cherokees for two hundred years back, having also procured many works written by old Indian traders and travelers upon their manners and customs. The Political and Civil History of Alabama from 1820 to the present period will not be written by Col. Pickett for the present, and perhaps never, although he has all the necessary materials. The History will contain about five hundred pages in one volume, illustrated with engravings and maps.—*Flag & Advertiser.*

A Chapter intended for the History of Alabama, now in a state of preparation for the press by Albert J. Pickett, of Montgomery.

Aaron Burr, his early life, his military achievements, his political aspirations and disappointments, his duel with Hamilton, his operations in the Western country in 1805-'6, the true particulars of his arrest in the wilderness of Alabama, in February 1807, and his journey to Richmond on horseback surrounded by a guard.

Col. Aaron Burr was born in Newark, State of New Jersey in February, 1756. He was descended of noble German ancestry on the paternal side. His Father, the Rev. Aaron Burr, was educated at Yale College. When Gov. Belcher established the College of Princeton, that gentleman received the appointment of President and immediately found himself at the head of seventy Students. In the month of August 1757 he died, remembered for his learning, eloquence and piety. His Mother was the daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, of Northampton, a man of the highest respectability and likewise the President of a College.—She, too, soon followed her husband to the grave. Thus was the boy Aaron, at the helpless age of three years without Father or Mother. He had a sister, but she was younger and more helpless than himself. But they were not dependent upon the cold charities of this world. Blest with property and near relations, they each lived to fill in their respectable spheres, a destiny high and honorable.

In 1769 young Burr entered Princeton College and graduated with honors at the age of sixteen. Having at this period received some religious impressions, he was frequently advised to study divinity. In the Autumn of 1773 he visited Joseph Bellamy, D. D., who received him with affection and threw open to him an extensive Theological Library. Here Burr read for some time with great scrutiny and application. But he abandoned the pursuit and became an inmate of the family of Judge Tappan Reeve, who had married his sister. At this time the topic of taxation and the rights of the American people agitated the then British Colonies from one extreme to the other. Young Burr examined the whole subject thorough and became a whig. In July 1775, he repaired to Cambridge and became a soldier in defense of American liberty at the age of twenty. While in camp and on a bed of sickness he overheard a conversation relative to the expedition to Quebec about to be entrusted to Arnold. Immediately impressed with the perils and boldness of the enterprise, so suitable to a gallant disposition like his, Burr, contrary to the urgent solicitations of his guardian, threw hi

knapsack on his back, shouldered his musket and marched for the place of embarkation. The expedition to Quebec was perhaps the most fatiguing and hazardous one ever made by troops, and the suffering from wet, cold and hunger, is indescribable. Yet the stripling Burr marched cheerfully through the forests and over mountain cliffs. When Arnold reached Clarendon Pond, Burr was selected to convey to General Montgomery a verbal message, which difficult task he performed by disguising himself in the dress of a Catholic Priest. Conversing fluently in Latin and French, the romantic youth went from one religious Convent to another unsuspected, until he arrived in the lines of Gen. Montgomery, to whom he delivered the message of Arnold, acquainting him with that officer's approach and future plans. The youth who possessed the address to accomplish such a feat as this, was born for a high and brilliant destiny! Struck with the wonderful and ingenious resources of the young man, Gen. Montgomery at once made him his aid, with the rank of Captain, and in the celebrated battle in which that hero lost his life, Burr commanded one of the wings of the army. Before daylight on the 31st December, 1775, the American attack was made upon Quebec, amidst a heavy Winter storm. The American troops, benumbed with cold and blinded with snow flakes, fell by hundreds before the British artillery, discolouring the snow-carpeted earth with the bravest blood! Capt. Burr was every where in the thickest of the dreadful carnage, and being the only surviving officer near, received into his arms the lifeless body of Gen. Montgomery.

On the 20th May, 1776, Major Burr was invited by General Washington to join his military family at Richmond Hill until he should receive a satisfactory appointment. Here shortly afterwards he was appointed aid to Major General Putnam, then stationed at New York. When the British force 20,000 strong, attacked Brooklyn Heights on the 27th August, 1776, Major Burr was actively engaged both night and day performing the most efficient services and displaying the most daring intrepidity. As long as he was attached to the staff of Putnam, he enjoyed that brave old man's confidence and esteem.—A new army was formed in the Spring of 1777, when Burr became a Lieutenant Colonel in the regiment of Col. Malcolm, a respectable Merchant, but unsuited for military life. This regiment was stationed at Ramapo, in the county of Orange, State of New York. The extreme youthful appearance of Burr, at first inspired his commanding officer with great doubts of his ability and experience to discharge the duties of his post. But his astonishing energy of character and fine military talents soon made such an impression upon the mind of Malcolm, as to induce him to confide to Burr the sole command. Retiring twenty miles distant with his family

Col. Malcolm remarked, "You, Col. Burr, shall have the honor of training and fighting the regiment, while I will be its Father." He kept his word, for in the frequent engagements afterwards, Burr had the sole direction of the troops. His surprises, his attacks, and retreats resembled those of the partisan officers of the South. He was the Marion of the North. Near Hackensack Burr surprised and captured a strong British guard, and was fast assembling a considerable force to attack the main army of 2000 strong when the enemy made a rapid retreat. While hanging upon their rear and marking their track with blood, young Burr was not out of his saddle for two day's and nights. Constantly engaged for two years in harassing the British, Col. Burr did not engage in any combined attack until the battle of Monmouth where his Brigade, composed of his own regiment, and some Germans, fought with the most obstinate, determined, and gallant bearing. It is not within our province to enumerate the brilliant military achievements of Col. Burr which would fill a volume. We forbear, by remarking that ill health, exhaustion from long exposure and arduous service, compelled him on the 10th March, 1779, to resign his post in the army. In the language of his Biographer, "He seemed as though he was born a soldier. He was ambitious of fame in his profession. He had acquired a character for vigilance and intrepidity, unrivaled in the army. He was more than respected by his brother officers and idolized by the troops."

On the 17th April, 1782, Col. Burr obtained licence to practice law, and at the age of twenty six he settled in Albany, to attend to his profession, and on the 2nd of July following was married to Mrs. Theodosia Provost, the splendid widow of a British officer. The Autumn of 1783, found him removed to the city of New York, where he immediately rose to the head of his profession. Col. Burr was several years a member of the New York Legislature, and on the 25th September 1789, Gov. Clinton conferred upon him the appointment of Attorney General.

Congress convened at Philadelphia in the fall of 1791, when Col. Burr took his seat in the Senate of the United States, from the State of New York, at the age of thirty-five. How rapidly did his great mind hurry him on to promotion and fame! On the 2nd October, 1792, the office of judge of the Supreme Court was tendered him by Gov. Clinton, which he thought proper to decline. He was a member of the Senate from the 4th March, 1791, to the 4th March, 1797. During all this period he attended closely to his profession and ranked high at the bar with Hamilton, Harrison and Livingston. Indeed he was regarded by many as a man of superior legal acumen to any before the tribunals of the country of that day. His speeches at the bar were remarkable for conciseness, clearness, great pith and point. His

manner was calm and persuasive. In April, 1798, Col. Burr was elected a member of the New York Legislature by the Democratic party. In 1800 he was placed on the same ticket with Jefferson, for President and Vice President. As the constitution was originally adopted, the person who had the greatest number of votes, provided they were a majority of the whole number given, was declared President, and the person having the next highest number, with the like provision, was deemed to be the Vice President. The termination of the election established the remarkable fact that Mr. Jefferson and Col. Burr had an equal number of votes: Burr obtained 73, Jefferson 73, John Adams 65, C. C. Pinckney 64. It devolved upon the House to choose between them, and now ensued one of the most exciting and bitter contests known to this Republic. The House resolved to attend to no other business until the election was decided. The balloting commenced on the 11th of February, 1801, and continued until the 17th. There were thirty six ballottings! During the seven days the presence of every member was indispensable. The sick were accommodated with beds and couches, and one member was even attended by his wife. Mr. John Adams was at that time the President and Thomas Jefferson Vice President, and were both about the scene of action. Col. Burr during the balloting remained in New York, conducting himself in a dignified manner. The subsequent attacks upon Col. Burr for intrigue and corruption during these seven days, came with a bad grace from some of his assailants who were themselves engaged in intrigue.—The contest finally resulted in the elevation of Mr. Jefferson to the highest seat in the gift of the country, Col. Burr became the presiding officer of the Senate, as the Vice President of the United States. He was one of the ablest and most dignified Vice Presidents that ever appeared in the American Union.

Col. Burr was nominated for Governor of the State of New York in February, 1804. Among his most unfriendly and formidable assailants, was found to be Gen. Alexander Hamilton, a distinguished jurist, a gallant officer, a pure patriot, and the bosom friend and companion of Washington. He took an active, in fact a bitter part against Burr. On several occasions he employed language in reference to Col. Burr, which that gentleman deemed highly injurious to his character as a gentleman and a statesman. Col. Burr demanded a retraction of the offensive epithets, and after various communications had passed between the parties, Hamilton refused to recede. Burr challenged him to mortal combat, and on the 11th July, 1801, at Weehawken, on the Jersey shore, they exchanged fires, when Hamilton fell and the next day died. "All party distinction was lost in the general sentiment expressed for the illustrious dead."

It was at once a fatal blow to all of Col. Burr's future ambitious views. Hamilton was a great man. His standing was most exalted. He was dead. He was killed. His eulogy was pronounced in every city to weeping thousands. Burr altho eminent every way, could not stand the torrent of public opinion. It swept him into temporary exile. Upon the sea coasts of Georgia and South Carolina, he wandered about in the Summer of 1804 among hospitable friends, to quiet public sentiment and to evade prosecutions. Had he have killed a man less lamented, his persecutions would not have subjected him to such an ordeal.

When Congress convened in the Fall, Col. Burr left his hospitable southern friends, repaired to Washington and presided over the Senate. The last public duty of importance performed by this distinguished but unfortunate man, was to preside in the case of Judge Samuel Chase, who was impeached before the Senate, for high crimes and misdemeanors. The trial commenced on the 4th of February 1805, and ended the 1st March. Col. Burr acquitted himself on this occasion in a manner commensurate with the force, address, the great dignity and the lofty mind with which his God had so eminently endowed him. Opponents as well as friends admired his energy, dignity and impartiality, qualities which won for him their profoundest respect. Judge Chase was acquitted.

When the lion is driven from field to field, and worried by combinations of men and arms, engaged in frequent hunts against him, he at length retreats to denser and more distant forests. So did Aaron Burr; but also like the king of beasts, he appeared in the Western wilds, still a lion, driven, but not overcome, bearing himself aloft with dignity and greatness, his head full of new schemes, of a bold and brilliant character. In 1805, Col. Burr was actively engaged in traveling in Tennessee and Kentucky. He was often at the house of Gen. Jackson, whom he describes as "a man of intelligence"—"a prompt, frank and ardent soul." From January until August of the following year, his hours were spent in the cities of Washington and Philadelphia. His mighty mind was constantly employed in endeavors to elevate himself above his fallen state. He deemed this period a favorable one for that purpose. For a long time the difficulties had been great in relation to the right of navigating the Mississippi river, between the Spanish possessions and the Western people. For years the Americans upon the Cumberland and Ohio had been anxious to expel the Spaniards from all dominion over the Western waters.—In addition to this, Col. Burr had all his life been an ambitious man and a bold speculator, frequently embarking in the purchase of large tracts of land, while his imagination was haunt-

and dizzled in revolving schemes for the conquest of Mexico. Before the cession of Texas to the United States, the Spanish government granted to Baron Bastrop 1,200,000 acres of land. Six tenths of this land for a sum of \$100,000, had been conveyed to a Col. Lynch. As the time within which two hundred families were to be colonized upon this tract, was fast drawing to a close, Lynch conveyed, for \$50,000, one half of his interest to Col. Burr. Burr's purchase lay between the Sabine and Natchitoches, and he advanced \$200 in cash, as was afterwards proved upon trial at Richmond. Besides the colonization of this tract, the great object of Burr was the conquest of Mexico. He had for years thought of it. His daughter, Theodosia, at an early period, had been instructed in riding, shooting and the sword exercise and taught the principles of war, of Republics and Monarchies, and was often told by him that she was to be the Queen of Mexico! He was at a period (1806,) impressed with the idea, and unalterable, that a war would ensue between Spain and the United States, and that United States' forces, under Gen. Wilkinson, amounting to about six hundred men, would be a nucleus, around which the troops which he intended to raise himself would form, and together constitute an army of invasion against the Spanish possessions in North America.

Gen. James Wilkinson has been accused by Burr's friends with being concerned in these schemes, and of having pledged himself to assist Burr with the United States' troops. It is due to the memory of Wilkinson to say that he always denied these charges. But the writer of this narrative is impressed with the belief derived from a minute examination of various authorities and public documents, that Wilkinson, like many other distinguished men in the Western country, did at first enter the schemes of Aaron Burr, but for some reason abandoned him when Burr became an object of suspicion to the Government. But this as it may, Aaron Burr only intended a colonization of his Bastrop claim and the conquest of Mexico, and those concerned with him were only guilty of attempts to take possession of a colony of Spain, a power scarcely considered at peace with the United States. One can does not usually make false statements in his death-bed, when he has no motive to do so. Aaron Burr died after a long life full of vice. He left but little character and no descendants to be affected by it. In his last hours, was asked by Dr. Hosack, an eminent and venerable Physician, if he had ever, at any time contemplated a dissolution of the Union. He indignantly replied: "No, I would as have thought of taking possession of the country and dividing it out among my friends."

Although Louisiana was now (1796) ceded to the United States, the Western people had not ceased to hate the late Spanish authorities, and were still desirous to be revenged upon them for their many aggressions upon Western commerce. The Spaniards were still in Texas and upon the waters of Red river and the Mobile. As Burr had to all appearance, become a ruined man in the Atlantic States and could never there hope to rise again to favor, it was natural that he should now appeal to the prejudices of men in the West, and to avail himself of their discontent. He doubtless, too, to many persons held out different views, as best suited his designs and their own feelings. It is perfectly natural that a man of his ingenuity should avail himself of all expedients to raise arms, money and men sufficient to conduct a magnificent conquest; the last hope left to gratify an inordinate ambition when the same scheme made him restless and feverish even in his days of honor and prosperity. A spirit like his could not be subdued by misfortunes or the common hatred of mankind. Success was ever uppermost in his mind. He knew that a failure would redound to his eternal disgrace. Hence every effort was made to enlist in the cause the wealthiest and most daring spirits of the West; and he did engage many such who afterwards abandoned him. It cannot be believed at this day that Aaron Burr would have attempted the expedition he did, no matter whether it was to invade Mexico, break up the Spanish possessions upon the Mobile river, Texas and the Floridas, or to dismember the Union and form a separate confederacy, without abundant assurances of support from many wealthy and influential persons in the West.

Aaron Burr, unfortunately for himself, lived at too early a period. The enterprise failed by the premature alarm of his associates, and he was forever a doomed man in public estimation. In 1836, the citizens of this very Western country poored in hundreds upon the plains of Texas, and took a large portion of this Mexican territory. The allies of Texas were citizens of the United States. They marched through Mobile and New Orleans armed and equipped, and were not arrested by the civil authorities of this Government. Was it thus with Col. Burr? Twice was he arrested and arraigned before the tribunals of Kentucky upon suspicion, and after that, when pursuing his way down the Mississippi, had his boats and men captured and he again held a prisoner.

Col. Burr has been treated by posterity with much injustice. His memory is still the theme of reproach. Early impressions are hard to eradicate. The beautiful speech of William Wirt, intended for the ears of the Jury alone, has been published, circulated extensively, incorporated in School Books, and memorised by

American youth. It was unfortunate for Burr that the speech ever was published, and no doubt Wirt often regretted that one of his legal efforts should have so indelibly impressed the rising generation with prejudices so unfavorable and so unjust towards that unfortunate man. In his behalf, we do now appeal to the youth of America, and particularly those of Alabama, for whom we are collecting historical facts, to discard from their minds the prejudicial effects of that speech. Young Alabamians, when you read that speech, remember at the same time Col. Burr's brilliant military and civil services which we have imperfectly enumerated. Reflect that he was ever, even under the most desperate circumstances, the man of lofty dignity and noble bearing. Altho' often assailed by others and hunted down like a wild beast, he persecuted not in return, and spoke evil of no one. Reflect also, that he was a most affectionate father, and to those in distress liberal in the extreme. Remember that Aaron Burr had his faults like other men, and altho' the one in regard to females was despicable and highly to be condemned, yet his memory should be treated with respect for the important services which he has rendered that country, within whose bosom it is your high privilege to live. And when you read of the destruction of the paradise at Blannerhassett Island, remember that Blannerhassett was the cause of his own ruin. He sought Burr—he was anxious to engage in his schemes—he was an extravagant, impulsive man, who was forced to fly from Ireland with his property for his attempts at Revolution. Burr did not enter the "terrestrial paradise" as a "serpent," but as a man of bold and brilliant schemes, into which Blannerhassett most eagerly and willingly enlisted.

The people of Kentucky became much excited in consequence of the designs of Burr. In November, 1806, J. H. Daviess the District Attorney having arrested him, failed before the Court in his attempt to fix treasonable intentions upon him. Being discharged at Lexington, Col. Burr proceeded to Nashville, where he received the warm congratulations of many friends. The most active preparations for the expedition were now made and boats for low water were constructed at various places on the Cumberland. Gen. John Adair, of Kentucky, one of the most active associates, repaired to Natchez and New Orleans, in company with others to arrange matters for the subsequent arrival of Col. Burr and his army. About this period hundreds of emigrants, traders and adventurers had come from the Ohio, singly and without order, dispersed in every town and settlement awaiting the approach of Col. Burr whose standard they intended to join. But for some cause he did not leave the Cumberland river, until the 22nd December, 1806, and the

Proclamation of President Jefferson had already reached the Mississippi Territory. The Governor of Louisiana issued a Proclamation on the 15th December, requiring all officers, civil and military in that region to resort to active measures in suppressing "the treasonable movements on the part of Burr," and to bring the offenders to justice. Cowles Mead, the acting Governor of the Mississippi Territory, issued a similar Proclamation on the 23d, both documents based upon the instructions from the Seat of Government. Great preparations were made to arrest Burr. Government officers were every where in motion. The military force on the lower Mississippi had already been distributed to protect New Orleans. Gen. Wilkinson united with the Spanish General at Natchitoches, to defeat the expedition against Mexico.

Gov. Mead ordered the four regiments of the Western counties of the Mississippi Territory to assemble for organization by the 20th January. In consequence of a dispatch from Washington City, which reached Natchez on the 10th, Governor Mead ordered a guard of sixty men to be stationed upon the bank of the river, to board and examine all boats, descending. He then prorogued the general assembly till the 19th to avert as he said "the approaching storm which presaged an explosion dangerous to domestic safety, and insulting to national dignity." While all these things were occurring, Col. Burr was descending the Mississippi in a quiet manner with boats, provisions, and sixty men.—When he reached the mouth of Bayou Pierre, Col. Ferdinand H. Claiborne embarked at Natchez, two hundred and seventy five men upon the broad Mississippi, under dark and lowering clouds, destined to Coles creek, twenty five miles distant. Here he was joined by a troop of Cavalry from Jefferson county. Shields and Poindexter, the aids of the Governor, were now dispatched with a message to Col. Burr, acquainting him with the forces assembled to defeat his operations from here to New Orleans, and inviting him to surrender. Col. Burr in an armistice agreed to meet the Governor at the house of Thomas Calvit, near Claiborne's encampment, and the next day he dropped down the river and visited the Governor in company with his friend Col. Fitzpatrick, of Jefferson county. Burr capitulated by surrendering himself, thirteen boats and sixty men at discretion. The cavalry troops received in charge the boats and men, while Col. Burr proceeded with the Governor to Washington, then the Capitol of the Mississippi Territory, six miles East of Natchez. Aaron Burr was now a prisoner of the United States. Abandoned by Wilkinson and others and opposed at every turn, he was compelled to bow to the decree of fate. At the Superior Court, Col. Burr appeared before Judge Rodney with Lyman Harding, Esq., and

Col. Benjamin Osmun as his securities, and was bailed in the sum of \$10,000 to appear at a Court to be held on the 3rd of February. His men were liberated at Natchez upon parole.

Col. Burr had the sympathies and warm friendship of many of the wealthiest and most respectable citizens of Adams county. In the surrounding neighborhood of Natchez and Washington he spent his time most delightfully, being caressed by all and honored with balls and parties. He did not fail to make friends everywhere, for who could resist his fascinating manner. On all occasions he denounced the charges that he had contemplated any thing hostile to the perpetuity and best interests of this Union. When Court convened, Col. Burr was attended by his council William B. Shields and Lyman Harding, Esquires. There was great excitement upon the occasion, and the people were generally in his favour. The Attorney General was George Poindexter, then a young man, but who has since occupied a large share in the political history of Mississippi and Alabama. After the Judge had finished a comprehensive charge to the Grand Jury expressly empanelled to investigate the charges against the prisoner—Mr. Poindexter moved their discharge, because he had been unable to find any testimony which brought the offences of Burr within the jurisdiction of the Courts of Mississippi. He requested that Col. Burr should immediately be sent to a tribunal competent to sit upon his case. Col. Burr objected to the discharge of the Grand Jury and remarked that he had a use for their services, altho' the Attorney General had none. Judge Rodney concurred with Poindexter, while Judge Bruin dissented and refused to discharge the jury unless Col. Burr was released from his recognizance. The next day the excitement was still greater and Col. Burr demanded a release from his bond, which the Court peremptorily refused. On Thursday the 6th of February Col. Burr did not make his appearance and it was soon ascertained that he had escaped. Governor Williams arriving that evening from his native State, North Carolina, offered a reward of \$2000 for his apprehension and delivery either to him at Washington, Mississippi, or to the federal authorities of the U. States. A troop of cavalry dispatched to Claiborne county in pursuit of Burr returned without finding him, and his destination was unknown.

The Court House of Washington county in the present State of Alabama, then known as a part of the Mississippi Territory, was in a small village called Wakefield, a few miles West of the Tombigby river. Here, late at night, in the month of February, 1807, Col. Nicholas Perkins, a Lawyer, and Thos. Malone, Clerk of the Court, were at a game of backgammon, beside their cabin fire. Presently the distant sound of horses' feet attracted their attention. The game

suddenly stopped and the players wondered who were the riders at such a late hour of the night. The little cabin stood immediately on the highway and two travellers rode near the door, who enquired if the village contained a tavern; answered in the affirmative, one of them asked if Col. Hinson lived in the neighborhood. He was informed that it was seven miles distant to his house, the road obscure and a difficult Creek lay in the route. Nothing daunted, the rider eagerly sought information as to the forks and how to cross the Creek. By this time the fire, replenished with light-wood, threw a blaze in the face of the traveller nearest the door. His countenance was highly interesting. His eyes sparkled like diamonds. He rode a splendid horse with fine saddle and holsters.—His dress was that of a very plain countryman, but beneath his coarse pantaloons protruded a pair of fashionable boots. His striking countenance, together with the strange mixture of his apparel and equipage produced in the mind of Perkins vivid and permanent suspicions, and as they rode off he remarked to Malone, "That is Aaron Burr." "How do you know?" "I have read a description of him in the proclamations, and I am certain 'tis he. He must be apprehended. Let us follow him to Hinson's and take measures for his arrest." Malone remonstrated upon the folly of such an expedition at so late an hour of the night, and declined to accompany him. The impulsive Perkins now waked up Theodore Brightwell, the Sheriff, then asleep in an adjoining house. Both mounting their horses, they took the road to Col. Hinson's. The night was bitter cold and the pine forest moaned and moaned again, the most lonesome and melancholly sighs!

The two strangers reached Col. Hinson's in safety about eleven o'clock at night, and hailed at the gate. The moon was now up and Mrs. Hinson rising from her bed, saw through the window their saddle bags and tin cups and knew they were travellers. She made no answer, because her husband was not at home.—The strangers went into the kitchen where a large fire was still blazing. Perkins and Brightwell shortly hove in sight of the dwelling.—The former recollecting that the travellers had seen him at the cabin declined to go in the House, but sent Brightwell, whom he requested to return to him at a certain place in the woods, after he had ascertained whether the person was Burr, or not. Mrs. Hinson recognizing the voice of the Sheriff, who was her relation, rose and opened the door, saying how glad she was to see him, as two strangers had stopped at the house and her husband being absent she felt alarmed. Brightwell repaired to the kitchen, found the mysterious traveller sitting by the fire with his head down and a handkerchief partly concealing his face. His companion had gone to attend to the horses. A hasty

supper was prepared in the main building, which was a double log house, and the strangers sat down to it. The elder gentleman thanked the lady in the most courteous terms for her kindness and apologised for the trouble they had imposed on her. His conversation was inost agreeable, and Mrs. Hinson soon discovered that the gentleman and his attire did not correspond. His attention was often directed to Brightwell, who stood before the fire and at whom he cast the keenest glances evidently endeavoring to read his thoughts. A momentary separation taking place between the strangers after supper, Mrs. Hinson asked the younger one, "Do I not sir have honor of entertaining in my house, the celebrated Col. Burr?" Confused and mortified he gave her no satisfactory answer, but left the room. This question was suggested by Brightwell, who had previously communicated his suspicions to her.

Early in the morning the mysterious personage, seeking a private interview, disclosed his name to Mrs. Hinson, regretted the absence of her husband whom he had seen at Natchez, said he was discovered and would prosecute his journey, but had intended passing a week with Col. Hinson. After enquiring the route to Pensacola, and Mrs Carson's ferry on the Tombigby, he called for writing materials and dictated several letters. His companion was despatched on the back route for some purpose.—He returned about 9 o'clock in the morning and the travellers set out for the Cut-off not far distant.

Let us now return to Col. Perkins whom we left last night in the woods, highly excited and shivering in the cold. Why did not Brightwell keep his promise? No one knows—it is a mystery to this day. Perkins remained at his post until his patience was exhausted and supposing that Brightwell, probably on account the fascinations of Burr, or the pity which had seized him in his behalf, had betrayed their plans, now mounted his horse and rode rapidly to the house of Mr. Joseph Bates, sr., at Nauvahubba Bluff, to avoid the Creeks in the main route to Fort Stoddart. He procured from that gentleman a canoe and negro, dropped down the Tombigby and arrived at Fort Stoddart just after day break. The commandant was Edmund P. Gaines, then a young Lieutenant, now a distinguished Major General. Col. Perkins briefly acquainted that officer with the particulars of his last night's adventure and of his suspicions, which altho' of slight foundation, had nevertheless impressed him with solemn convictions of their truth.—Placing himself at the head of a file of mounted soldiers, the Lieutenant immediately rode off with Perkins. On the rise of a hill, South of a branch and near a wolf-pen, two miles below Col. Hinsons, the Lieutenant suddenly encountered the person he was pursuing, riding in company with his travelling companion, and the

Sheriff Brightwell, when the following conversation took place.

Gaines. I presume I have the honor of addressing Col. Burr?

Burr. I am a traveller and a stranger in the land; and I do not recognize your right to ask such a question.

Gaines. I arrest you at the instance of the United States.

Burr. By what authority do you arrest me, a traveller and stranger in the highway, on my own private business?

Gaines. I am an officer of the United States army. I hold in my hand the Proclamation of the President, and the Governor of the Mississippi Territory, directing your arrest.

Burr. You are a young man and may not be aware of the responsibility of arresting a traveller?

Gaines. I am aware of my responsibility—I know my duty.

Col. Barr now entered into a brief argument to shew that these proclamations should never have been issued, and that in following their dictates the Lieutenant would be subjecting himself to much damage and blame. His manner was firm, his air majestic, and his language impressive; but the firm young officer told him his mind was made up—he must accompany him to his quarters where he would be treated with all the respect due the ex-Vice President of the United States, so long as he made no attempt to escape. Without further remonstrance, Col. Burr became a prisoner, and separated from the two gentlemen riding with him. The party reached Fort Stoddart in the evening, and the prisoner was shewn his apartment where he took his dinner alone. Late in the night, Col. Burr heard a groan in an adjoining room. He rose, opened the door, and approached the bed-side of Mr. George S. Gaines, who was suffering from sickness.—Burr's manner was kind to him, he felt his pulse, offered his services, said he had traveled much and knew something of medicine. They entered into a sprightly conversation. Burr asked questions about the country and the Choctaw Indians, among whom Mr. Gaines lived as United States factor. The next day Burr being introduced to the wife of the commandant, a daughter of the late Judge Harry Toulman, dined with the family, and enlivened the whole party with his wit, sprightliness and elegant discourse. In the evening, he played chess with Mrs. Gaines, with whom he was often a frequent competitor in that interesting game. Of nights he sought the company of the invalid, who became exceedingly attached to Col. Burr. During their mid-night conversations, often and often would the good heart of George S. Gaines grieve over the misfortunes of this great man. During the time they were together, Col. Burr never once allu-

ded to his arrest, his troubles or his future plans. From early youth it had been his custom to conceal things in relation to himself, and he always endeavored to throw an air of mystery over his acts.

After Col. Burr had been safely conducted to Fort Stoddart, the indefatigable Perkins departed for Wakefield, and caused the arrest of Burr's traveling companion, who was a Maj. Ashly. Justices William H. Hargrave and John Caller placed him under a guard, from whom he fled in the night, and made his way rapidly to Tennessee, where he became engaged in taking testimony for Burr's trial at Richmond.—The distinguished prisoner had been confined at the Fort for three weeks before Lieutenant Gaines completed his arrangements to convey him to Washington city. The difficulties were great. There were no roads, no carriages, no ferries, and few men could be found in the then sparsely settled country who would undertake a journey so long and perilous over savage lands. Finally, Col. Burr left the fort under guard, and proceeded in a government boat up the Alabama river and into the Tensaw lake, with Lieutenant Gaines, and stopped at the house of Mr. John Mills. Here some ladies wept upon seeing the low estate to which this great man was reduced, and one of them, Mrs. Jack Johnson, named her son Aaron Burr. He is still alive, and he was not the only boy named Aaron Burr in the Mississippi Territory. The ladies every where espoused his cause in this South Western new world. It is a prominent and noble trait in the female character, to admire a man of daring and generous impulses, and to pity and defend him in his adversities.

At the boat yard in the present county of Baldwin, State of Alabama, the crew disembarked, and here lived William and John Pierce, natives of New England, who had several years before established one of the first cotton gins in Alabama, and a trading establishment. Gaines gave the command of the guard intended to convey Burr to Washington City, to Colonel Nicholas Perkins, a lawyer, late from Tennessee. His men were Thomas Malone, formerly a clerk in the land office at Raleigh, N. C., and then the clerk of Washington county, Alabama. John Henry, of Tennessee, John Mills, a native of Alabama, Henry B. Slade of North Carolina, and two brothers, McCormicks, from Kentucky—added to these were two United States soldiers. They were all men whom Perkins selected, and whom he could rely upon under all circumstances. He took these men aside and obtained from them the most solemn pledges, that upon the whole route to Washington city, they would not converse with Burr, or let him escape alive. Perkins knew how fascinating Burr was and he feared his familiarity with his men—indeed, he feared the same

influence upon himself. His character for making strong impression upon the human mind and attaching men to him by association,* was well known to the world. When Col. Burr fled from the Natchez settlement, he procured a disguised dress and was still attired in it.—His pantaloons were of coarse, coaperas cloth with a roundabout of interior drab. His hat a flapping, wide-brimmed beaver, had in times been white but now gave evidences of having encountered much rough weather. Placed upon his fine horse, he bestrode him most elegantly and flashed his large dark eyes as though he were at the head of his New York regiment.—To use a common expression of the old settlers who saw him in Alabama, "his eyes were peculiar, they looked like stars." Each man of the expedition carried provisions for himself and some for Col. Burr. They were all well mounted, with no arms except pistols in holsters, and two muskets, borne by the two soldiers. The party set out from the boat yard in the latter part of February, 1807. In a quarter of a mile of this place the dreadful massacre of Fort Mims occurred six years afterwards. Pursuing the Indian path which led from the "Bigby settlement" to Fort Wilkinson on the distant Ocnee, the guard traveled the first day about 30 miles. At night the only tent in company was pitched for the prisoner, who reposed himself upon his blankets. The lower part of Monroe county, abounded with immense pine forests. Here the Ex-Vice President lay, the first night, by rousing fires, which threw a glare over the dismal woods, while his ears were saluted with the howl of hungry wolves! In the wilds of Alabama in a small tent, reposed this august personage; having no one to converse with; surrounded by a guard; a prisoner of the United States, for whose liberties he had fought; whose government he had helped to form; exiled from New York whose statutes and institutions bore the impress of his great mind; deprived by death of his splendid wife; his only child then on the distant coast of Carolina; his professional pursuits abandoned and his fortune swept from him; the magnificent scheme of the conquest of Mexico uprooted and the fragments dispersed; slandered and hunted down from one end of the Union to the other—all these things were sufficient to weigh down an ordinary being and sink him to an untimely grave. Col. Burr, however, was no common man. In the morning he rose cheerfully and pursued his journey. Although guarded with vigilance, his few wants were gratified as far as they could be, and he was treated with respect and kindness. The trail being narrow, as are all Indian highways, Burr rode in the middle, having a part of the guard in front and the others behind him, all in single file. The route lay about eight miles south of the present

city of Montgomery, then an Indian town called Econeharte, meaning *Red Ground*. In 1811 General Wade Hampton cut out the "Federal road" along this trail, which was well known to early settlers as the only highway in South Alabama. The guard passed by the site of the present Mount Meigs and stopped at the house of "old Milley," the former wife of a British soldier who, with her husband, in 1770, left the barracks at Savannah & come to the creek nation. She had long been a resident of these wild woods, now lying in the county of Montgomery. Her husband at this time, a colored man named Evans, was employed by Perkins to pilot the party across the dangerous creeks, Line, Cubahatchee and Calebee, all of which they had to swim. It was a perilous and fatiguing march, and for days the rain descended in chilling torrents upon these unsheltered horsemen, collecting in rivulets and swimming them at every point. Hundreds of Indians thronged the trail and in a moment the party could have been shot down; but the fearless Perkins bore on his distinguished prisoner amid angry elements and human foes. In their journey through Alabama, they always slept in the woods, near swamps of reed, upon which the belled and hobbled horses fed during the night. After a hastily prepared breakfast, it was their custom, again, to remount and march on in gloomy silence, which was sometimes broken by a remark about the weather; the creeks, or the horses. Col. Burr was a splendid rider, sitting firmly in the saddle, and always on the alert. He was also a hardy traveler. Altho' wet for hours with a cold and clammy rain, riding forty miles a day, and at night stretched upon the bare ground upon a thin pallet, yet in the whole distance to Richmond, the impenetrable Aaron Burr was never heard to complain that he was sick, or even fatigued. At the Chattahoochie was a crossing place, owned by an Indian named Marshal. The effects of the expedition were carried over the river in canoes, and the horses swam along side. In this manner they crossed the Flint and Ocmulgee. Arriving at Fort Wilkinson, on the Oconee, they entered the first ferry boat they had seen on the whole route. A few miles further on they were sheltered by the first civilized roof—a house of entertainment kept by one, Bevin. While breakfast was preparing, and while the guard were seated around a large fire, the host, like all publicans on the highway, enquired from whence they came. As they were from the "Bigbee settlements," he immediately fell upon the fruitful theme of the traitor, *Aaron Burr*. He asked if he had been taken, was he not a very bad man, and wan't every body afraid of him? Perkins and his party were very much annoyed and embarrassed, and made no reply. Burr was sitting in a corner by the fire with his head down; he now raised it, and planting

his fiery eyes upon Bevin, said: "I am Aaron Burr, what is it you want with me?" Bevin, struck with his appearance, the keenness of his look, the solemnity and dignity of his manner, stood aghast and trembled like a leaf. He uttered not another word while the guard remained at his house.

When Perkins reached the confines of South Carolina, he watched Burr more closely than ever. In this State lived Burr's son-in-law, Col. Joseph Alston, a man of talents, wealth and influence, and afterwards the Governor of the State. Perkins, upon reaching the frontier of Georgia, endeavored to convey the prisoner in bye-roads, and to avoid the towns, lest he should be rescued. The plan was attended with difficulty—they were lost often, the march impeded and the tighway was again resumed. Just before entering the town of Chester Court House, in South Carolina, the party halted. Two men were placed before Burr, two on either side, and two behind, and in this manner they passed near a tavern in the street, where many persons were standing, while music and dancing was heard in the house. Seeing the assembly of men so near him, Col. Burr suddenly dismounted, and exclaimed in a loud voice, "I AM AARON BURR, UNDER MILITARY ARREST, AND CLAIM THE PROTECTION OF THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES!" Perkins immediately dismounted with several of the guard, and ordered him to remount. Burr said, "I WILL NOT." Not wishing to shoot him, Perkins threw down his pistols, and being a man of prodigious strength, and the prisoner a small man, seized him round the waist and placed him in his saddle as though he were a child. Thomas Malone seized the reins of the horse, slipped them over his head and led Burr rapidly on. The astonished citizens of Chester Court House had seen a party enter with a prisoner, had heard him appeal to them for protection, had seen him forced on his horse again, and the party vanish before they had time to recover from their confusion: for when Burr got down from his horse, the guard generally cocked their pistols and the people ran in the piazza to get out of danger. This feat proves that Perkins was well fitted for the difficult task Lieutenant Gaines had assigned him.

Burr was still, to some extent, popular in South Carolina, and any wavering or timidity on the part of Perkins would have lost him his prisoner; but the celerity of his movements gave no time for the people to reflect, before he was far off in the outskirts of the village.—Here the guard halted; Col. Burr was in a high state of excitement—he was in tears! The kind-hearted Malone also wept at seeing the low condition to which this great man was brought. It was the first time any one had ever seen Aaron Burr unmanned. The bold attempt to escape, its failure, and the treatment

he received, produced these sudden emotions.

The guard were very much alarmed for fear Burr would be rescued in South Carolina.—Malone and Henry advised the purchase of a carriage. The former took charge of the guard and proceeded on, while Perkins returned to the village and purchased a gig. The next day Burr was placed in this vehicle and was driven without further incident to Fredericksburg, Va. Here dispatches from President Jefferson required Perkins to convey the prisoner to Richmond. The guard took the stage and soon reached that place. The ladies of Richmond vied with each other in contributing to the comforts of Col. Burr. Some sent him fruit, some clothes, some wine, some one thing and some another. Perkins and his men went to Washington, were paid for their services and returned to Alabama by way of Tennessee.

Col. Burr arrived at Richmond, on the 26th March, 1807. For the want of testimony he was not placed on trial for "treason" until the 27th August. On the 1st September the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty." While at Richmond he was entertained in good style, at the Hotel a portion of the time. On the 30th June, however, he was committed to the Penitentiary, where he was furnished with three good rooms in the third story, making an extent of one hundred feet. Here many distinguished friends paid him their respects, and his daughter, Mrs. Alston, and her son, lived with him. Thus were the only members remaining, of this eventful family, in prison together. On the 9th September a jury was empanelled to try Col. Burr, far "misdemeanor," and on the 15th Mr. Hay, the District Attorney, not being able to make out the case for the United States, moved that the Jury be discharged. The prisoner objecting, and insisting on a verdict, the Court refused to discharge the Jury, and after a short absence, they returned with a verdict of acquittal. Thus ended the most expensive and extraordinary trial known to the country.

The feeling against Col. Burr, on account of the killing of Hamilton, rendered his home an unsuitable place to reside, and he determined to travel in Europe, until time should allay the prejudices of men. On the 17th June, 1808, Col. Burr sailed for England, where he spent much time, being treated with great distinction. The winter of 1809, found him in Edinburg. He resided some time in Sweden and Germany and went from the latter country to Paris, the 16th February, 1810. Bonaparte, influenced no doubt by letters from America, conceived an

immovable prejudice against Col. Burr, and for a long time, refused to grant him passports to leave the country. At length in June, 1811, the Duke de Bassano, influenced Napoleon to permit him to leave the Continent, and he arrived in New York the 8th June, 1812. Here he became engaged in his profession, living in dignified obscurity, if such a position could be assigned to a man of his notoriety. Having lost his wife, his grand son, Aaron Burr Alston, and lastly his accomplished daughter, Theodosia, who perished upon the Ocean, and over whose melancholy fate hangs mystery to this day, Col. Burr was, in addition to his persecutions, the most bereaved man in the world! He had nothing to live for, yet he lived to the advanced age of eighty! On the 11th September, 1836, he died without a struggle, on Staten Island, New York, whither he had gone for pure air. His body, attended by relations and friends, was placed on board of a steam-boat, taken to Amboy and from thence to Princeton, where it was entombed with military honors, among the graves of his ancestors!

Note—No one knows where Col. Burr was going when arrested by Lieutenant Gaines, but from his enquiries of Mrs. Hinson and the course he was pursuing, the strong presumption is that he was endeavoring to reach Pensacola, and from thence to sail for a foreign country.

The foregoing historical sketch has been compiled from the best authorities—from Monette's History of the Mississippi Valley—Memoirs of Aaron Burr, by M. L. Davis—Clarke's proofs of the corruption of Wilkinson—Memoirs of Wilkinson, by himself—Familiar Letters on Public characters, and the various American State papers.

The facts which relate more immediately to Alabama, I have derived from the lips of Mr. George S. Gaines, of Mobile, one of the purest and best men in the State, from Mr. Thomas Malone, a venerable and highly respectable citizen of Mobile county, who was one of Burr's guards, as related. I also made notes from conversations with Mrs. Sturdevant, formerly Mrs. Hinson, at whose house Burr stopped all night, and from Mrs. Houze, both ladies of great respectability, now residing in Mobile. I have endeavoured to present Aaron Burr to the country as he was at that day, free from prejudice on my part. I believe the sketch to be a correct one in all respects.

A. J. PICKETT.

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